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JudTestimony
HB 16

I am writing to oppose 2022 HB 16. This legislation is aimed at lowering crime here in the state, which all citizens would agree the 30% uptick in crime needs to stop. The politicians supporting this keep referring to the issue as "gun crime" but let's be honest, guns are not committing these crimes, bad people are, so blaming inanimate objects on the actions of humans just sounds silly. This bill would not affect the crime rate in any way, simply because law abiding gun owners are not out in the streets committing violent crimes with their legally obtained firearms. Only criminals, mostly located in the cities are committing these crimes with their illegally obtained firearms, and for some reason are being completely ignored with this bill, and are somehow given a free pass to run wild in the streets committing violent crime. This bill would act much like the government seizing the automobiles of people who don't drink alcohol, thinking it would decrease drunk driving. The responsible 320,000 legal gun owners in this state who abide by all the laws, are getting tired of being the ones blamed, & targeted for the crimes they do not commit. There is absolutely zero data that so called "assault weapons" are being used in these crimes by legal gun owners to substantiate this bill. The police who have had their hands tied due to political policy in this state, cannot effectively do their jobs and apprehend the criminals, and even if they are apprehended, they will be back out on the street with little to no consequence. Bail reform is the subject the politicians should be pushing if they want to actually reduce crime. Certainly the 26,000+ gun laws already on the books, and previous "Assault Weapon Bans" have not helped deter the criminals.

The recent events in Ukraine should serve as an eye-opening reality check to every American, whether they support the bill of rights or not. We see the democratic side applauding the Ukrainian government giving their citizens fully automatic weapons to people with absolutely zero firearms training or experience, while at the same time calling for bans and confiscations of weapons for their own citizens here. We can't even get fully automatic weapons due to the 1986 ban. If this war unravels to foreign powers invading the USA, a trained and armed citizenry is the best backup to our military, and is the reason Japan said they wouldn't attack mainland USA because "there would be a rifle behind every blade of grass."

Limiting the types of weapons law abiding citizens can obtain is a violation of the 2nd amendment. A quick check of the FBI stats (<https://ucr.fbi.gov/crime-in-the-u.s/2019/crime-in-the-u.s.-2019/tables/expanded-homicide-data-table-8.xls>) show that murders with rifles of all types is as follows: 2015: 215 deaths, 2016: 300 deaths, 2017: 389 deaths, 2018: 305 deaths, & 2019: 364 deaths. Out of a population of 330 million people, and an estimated 20 million AR style rifles in common use, proves that so-called "assault weapons" are not the problem.

I ask the politicians take a step back and consider that this bill would criminalize good citizens, put them in a position where they cannot protect themselves from the criminals their political policy has put in place, and has frankly emboldened them because they are never held liable. History proves that gun registration always leads to confiscation, and the fact the ATF already has an illegal gun registry of over 1 billion guns is an example of the government violating their own laws. Thank you for your time in reading this testimony. Oppose HB16, Oppose HB5416, Support Senate Bill 388

Regards, John Oppel. Guilford CT